

2012-2013 Discovery Center School Programs

Located at 4750 Troost, Kansas City, Missouri, the Gorman Conservation Discovery Center has school programs align with Missouri grade level expectations and Missouri Department of Conservation's Discover Nature Schools curriculum and grant program. Kindergarten classes can schedule one workshop per day. Each program is taught for a class with a minimum of 10 and maximum of 125 students.

All programs include ample time outdoors, so please help children prepare accordingly with appropriate clothing, sunscreen and insect repellent as needed. To schedule a program, please email dcprograms@mdc.mo.gov.

Discover Nature Schools programs

Acorn to Oak (K-2 grade) From seed to sapling to shade tree, the oak changes through the seasons and the years. Through movement and exploration, students will understand the lifecycle of a tree. On a hike, students will explore various life stages of oak trees, taking a closer look as they use magnifying glasses. Creation of a tree relief sculpture using recycled wood products helps students review and represent their new knowledge. (1 ½-2 hours)

Becoming Bears (K-2 grade) By becoming bear cubs, children learn from their “parent” to survive the seasons. Students will find safety in the spring and learn the variety of food bears eat during the summer, then create a den site for winter's hibernation. After learning the variety skills needed to survive, students will emerge from the den as an independent black bear able to care for themselves. (1 ½-2 hours)

Outdoor Sensations (K-2 grade) The natural world is filled with sights, sound, textures and smells. Students will see live animals and learn how wild animals rely on their senses to find food and survive. Spending time outside, students will participate in various hands-on activities, focusing on each of their four senses (not taste) to better experience the natural world. (1 ½-2 hours)

No Place Like Home (3-5 grade) Ecosystems provide organisms with everything they need to survive. Through hands-on investigation, students will explore and learn about the plants and animals living in three Missouri ecosystems: pond prairie and forest. This program culminates as small groups create an artistic expression incorporating plants and animals, food chains and non-living components of a specific ecosystem. (3-4 hours)

Whose Clues (3-5 grade) On a scavenger hunt, students will discover what specialized structures are and how plants and animals use them to survive. Through interactive investigation of skulls, beaks, pelts, live animals, students will identify animal specialized structures and how they enable species to eat, avoid predators and survive. This program culminates as small groups create an artistic expression of their own species and identify how they survive in their habitat. (3-1/2–4 hours)

Winged Wonders (3-5 grade) Birds add color and sound to our world and fill an important ecological role. Students will learn the basics of bird identification, understand the role birds play in food chains and go bird watching using field guides and binoculars. Using hammer and nails, students will build bird feeders, allowing them to attract birds at home. (3-4 hours)

Exploring Your Watershed (6-8 grade) We all live in a watershed and depend on clean water. Examine how our actions shape the waterways around us. Interact with the Brush Creek Model and go on a hike to see first-hand some of the challenging water quality issues in an urban setting. Students will assess water quality using live macroinvertebrates to determine the health of an ecosystem. (3-4 hours)

Lewis and Clark themed programs

Interdisciplinary school programs, also aligned with Missouri grade level expectations. Each program is taught for a class with a minimum of 10 students and maximum of 25 students.

Bounty of Lewis & Clark (4-8 grade) Explore with George Drouillard as students become teams of hunters using the laser shot simulator. Students will also explore and investigate different habitats the members of the Corps of Discovery encountered and the animals that live there. (1 ½-2 hours)

We Proceeded On (4-8 grade) Explore with York as students pack for the journey up river in 1804. Experience a “beast of a river” as we manage the stream table. Journal with a turkey feather quill pen and learn some of the fish encountered by the Corps of Discovery. (1 ½-2 hours)

Trees of Discovery (4-8 grade) Students explore the world of trees like their host Meriweather Lewis as they use a dichotomous key to identify trees and make leaf prints of the same trees that have a Lewis & Clark connection. (1 ½-2 hours)

Habitat Helpers (4-8 grade) Patrick Gass is the host of this workshop and will introduce the students to the importance of habitat by taking a close look at the extinct Carolina Parakeet. Students will construct a bird feeder to help the present day habitat of our bird populations. (1 ½-2 hours)

Striking Directions (4-8 grade) Captain Clark is the host as students learn how to use primitive fire starting techniques. Students become explorers by learning to use a compass and set out on an orienteering course. (1 ½-2 hours)

Through Their Eyes (4-8 grade) Explore with Sacagawea as students construct and use a plant press, discover the instruments used by L & C, learn about native plants, and journal through their eyes! (1 ½-2 hours)